

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of the pending claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of closing a skin laceration wherein the laceration extends through the dermis and the subcutaneous fat layer comprising:

(a) providing a suture including at least one gold thread and at least one bioabsorbable thread braided together;

(b) inserting the suture into the dermis and through the subcutaneous fat layer on one side of the laceration;

(c) inserting the suture at the base of the laceration;

(d) inserting the suture through the subcutaneous fat layer and into the dermis on the other side of the laceration to form a loop under the skin;

(e) repeating the steps (b)-(d) in another insertion 3 to 5 mm from the loop to close the laceration; and

(f) tightening the suture line by applying tension to the loops to bring one side of the laceration into contact with the other side of the laceration.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein step (e) of repeating the steps in another insertion 3 to 5 mm from the loop is performed in a continuous manner.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein step (e) of repeating the steps in another insertion 3 to 5 mm from the loop is performed in an interrupted manner and wherein step (f) of tightening the suture is performed following step (d).

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the base of the laceration is a part of the aponeurosis.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the suture is tacked on the aponeurosis.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein knots are formed on both ends of the suture, leaving the entire suture under the skin.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the suture is inserted between hair follicles in hair-bearing skin regions.
8. (Canceled).
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the suture has a thickness in the range of 2 to 10 gauge.
10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 wherein the suture is braided with 3 to 9 threads.
11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the suture comprises 1 to 5 gold threads.
12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the suture comprises 1 to 5 bioabsorbable threads.
13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the suture comprises 50% gold threads and 50% bioabsorbable threads.
14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the bioabsorbable threads can be

selected from polymeric threads and non-polymeric threads.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim & 1 wherein the gold threads are from different gold alloys.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim & 1 wherein the suture is attached to different types of needles.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim & 1 wherein the suture has a braid angle of 45 degrees.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for closing a laceration in a skin, wherein said laceration extends through a dermis and a subcutaneous fat layer, comprising:

(a) providing a suture, said suture including at least one gold thread and at least one bioabsorbable thread braided together;

(b) inserting said suture into said dermis and through said subcutaneous fat layer on a first side of said laceration;

(c) inserting said suture at a base of said laceration, wherein said base includes at least a portion of an aponeurosis;

(d) inserting said suture through said subcutaneous fat layer and into said dermis on a second side of said laceration;

(e) tightening said suture to bring said first side of said laceration generally into contact with said second side of said laceration, wherein said suture is positioned generally entirely below said skin; and

(f) aligning said skin on said first side of said laceration with said skin on said second side of said laceration.

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19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 further comprising repeating steps (b)-(d) until said laceration is generally closed.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein said aligning step includes at least one of applying adhesive tape to said skin and applying temporary sutures to said skin